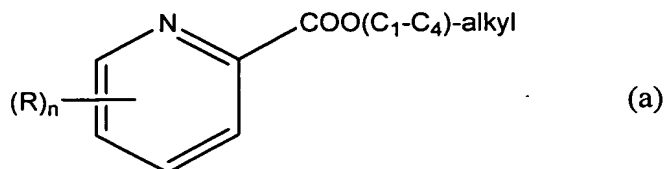


AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a C₁-C₄-alkyl pyridine-2-carboxylate

~~derivatives~~ compound of the formula a

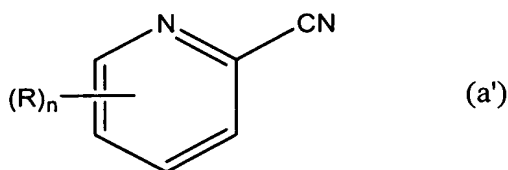


in which

R is hydrogen or a C₁-C₁₂-alkyl or C₁-C₁₂-alkox radical and

n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4,

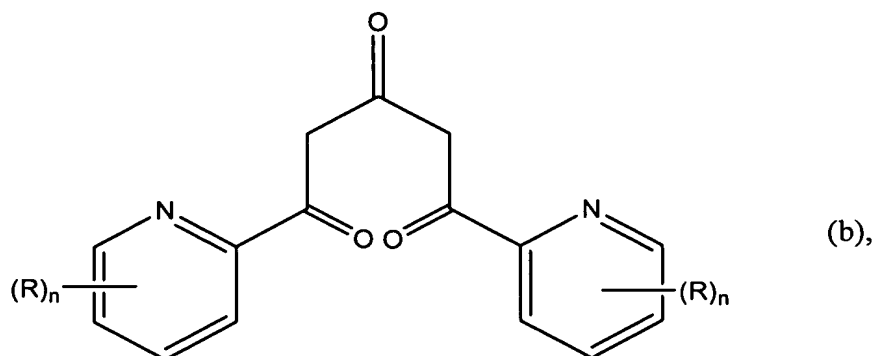
by acid hydrolysis of a 2-cyanopyridine ~~derivative~~ compound of the formula a'



by means of an anhydrous inorganic acid or its anhydride in the presence of water and a C₁-C₄-alkanol, wherein an equimolar amount of water is added to the 2-cyanopyridine ~~derivative~~ compound of the formula a' prior to addition of the anhydrous inorganic acid or its anhydride.

9. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a 1,5-bis(2-pyridyl)pentane-1,3,5-trione

~~derivatives~~ compound of the formula b

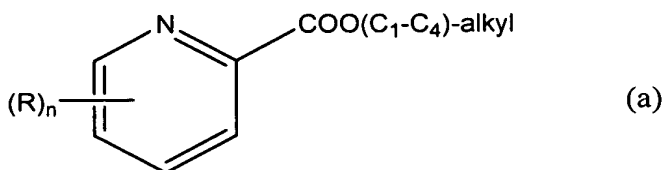


in which

R are hydrogens or identical C₁-C₁₂-alkyl or C₁-C₁₂-alkoxy radicals and

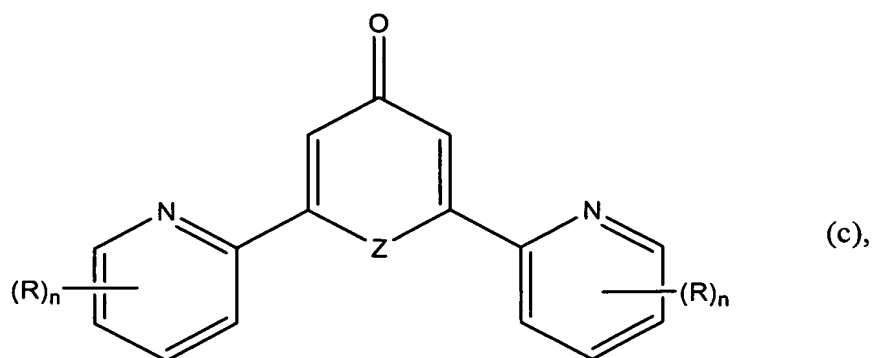
n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and is the same for both sets of radicals R,

by condensation of the C₁-C₄-alkyl pyridine-2-carboxylate derivative compound of the formula a



with acetone in an aprotic solvent in the presence of an alkali metal C₁-C₄-alkoxide or alkaline earth metal C₁-C₄-alkoxide as base.

10. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is an alkali metal C₁-C₄-alkoxide.
11. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is sodium C₁-C₄-alkoxide.
12. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is sodium methoxide.
13. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a 2,6-bis(2-pyridyl)-4(1*H*)pyridinone derivatives compound of the formula c



in which

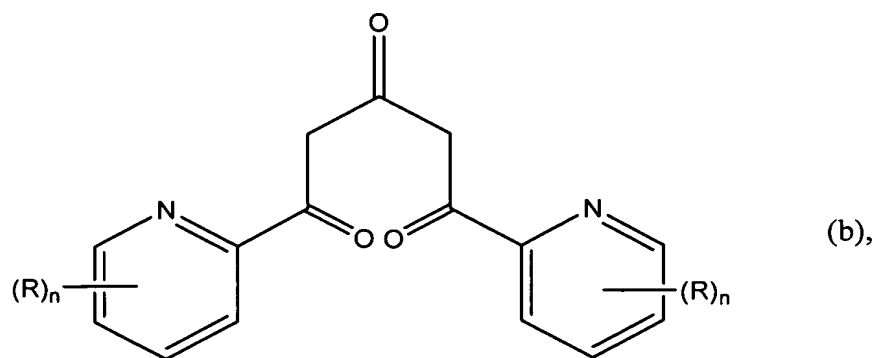
R are hydrogens or identical C₁-C₁₂-alkyl or C₁-C₁₂-alkoxy radicals,

n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and is the same for both sets of radicals R,

Z is NH or NH₂[⊕][Y_{1/q}][⊖] and

Y is the anion of a q-basic acid H_qY,

by reacting the 1,5-bis(2-pyridyl)pentane-1,3,5-trione derivative compound of the formula b



with ammonia or ammonium salts (NH₄)_qY with removal of the water of reaction formed, wherein the removal of the water of reaction is carried out using a C₁-C₄-alcohol as entrainer.

14. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the removal of the water of reaction is carried out using ethanol, n-propanol, i-propanol or n-butanol as entrainer.

15. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the removal of the water of reaction
is carried out using ethanol as entrainer.

16. – 17. (Cancelled)